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Columbia Students Drive CIA Agents Off Campus

Eighteen Columbia University students face disciplinary action by the University for their sit-in demonstration which drove from the campus two Central Intelligence Agency recruiters last week.

The students were acting without the official sanction of any school organization, although most of them are members of the campus chapter of Students for a Democratic Society. Their presence in front of a room in which the recruiters were attempting to hold job interviews with Columbia students prevented the interviews from taking place and led to the recruiters' departure from the campus last Wednesday and the cancelling of all subsequent interviews during the rest of the week.

The demonstrators defined their purpose as a moral one.

They contend that the C.I.A. is an institution of dubious virtue and cannot be viewed in the same light as any other job recruiter. They feel that in allowing the C.I.A. access to campus facilities for the purposes of job recruitment the University is, to an extent, sanctioning an aggressive foreign policy which, in their opinion, the C.I.A. represents. They advocate the severing of all ties between Columbia and the implementation of that policy.

The official University policy, as stated by President Grayson Kirk, is to assume a "value-free" attitude toward job recruiters, discriminating against none of them and granting them all equal access to school facilities. In preventing the implementation of this policy, the 18 students have been considered by the Dean's office to be in violation of school regulations and now face disciplinary actions which could be as severe as suspension or expulsion.

The Columbia Student Council has urged the administration to follow the principle of due process in its dealings with the students involved. It has advocated that the Committee on Student Life, (made up of students, faculty members, and administrators) should serve as the hearing body in the case. The CUSC also recommends that the students not be barred from further political activity on campus, and that leniency be shown toward them to avoid the creation of an atmosphere of hostility and ill-will between politically active students and the administration.

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